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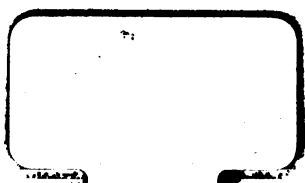
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FROM
 GREAT BRITAIN
 TO
 GREATER BRITAIN

 BY
 T. C. SMITH



At the author's command.

Will J. Lullis
Carters / 91

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1. Australia — Descs and Trav., 1850-1900.

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FROM GREAT BRITAIN

TO

GREATER BRITAIN;

OR,

A Voyage to Australia.

BY

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TOM C. SMITH.

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PREFACE.

AT the request of a few friends, the following description of a short visit to Australia is published, in the hope that it may interest some of the constantly-increasing number of English people who take an interest in our great Southern Colonies.

The greater portion of these pages appeared originally in the shape of letters to *The Preston Guardian*, supplemented largely by notes from the Diary which the writer kept.

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LONGRIDGE, PRESTON,

May 18th, 1888.

Manuscript sent 15 Dec. 1942

FROM GREAT BRITAIN TO GREATER BRITAIN.

THE ORIZABA—A MODERN STEAMSHIP.

NO PLEASANTER trip, whether for health's sake, or for pleasure, can be taken than a voyage to Australia at the present season (November) of the year. And I venture to say that it would be hard to find a pleasanter means of making this trip than on one of the splendid steamers of the Orient line. The steamer on which we were is by no means the worst of the line. The Orizaba, commanded by Capt. Conlan, has acquired a well-deserved reputation for speed and comfort, and a few days experience amply sufficed to justify the reputation. Built in 1886 by the Barrow Steamship Company, she is one of the newest boats of the Orient line, and is fitted up with all modern improvements. Some idea of the size of the Orizaba may be formed when I state that her tonnage is over 6,000 tons, and that she has an effective horse-power of 7,000. Her measurement is—length, 180 yards; width, 22 yards. Lighted with the electric light, both in the saloon and staterooms, as well as on deck; fitted with all the most modern improvements in the way of baths, lavatories, and a barber's shop. The barber's shop was quite an institution on board. In fact, the term "general emporium" would more correctly describe it. Anything could be obtained from pipes to hairpins, from clothing of all sorts to chocolates and "lollies." A fancy dress ball revealed most fully of all its unlimited resources. To the barber were confided schemes for getting up various wonderful costumes, and the trust placed in him was rarely imposed in vain.

The drawing-room was handsomely furnished, and contained a piano and organ; while the interests of the gentlemen were by no means neglected, as the large and comfortable smoking-room—a refuge in hot and cold weather alike—abundantly testified.

But, after all, it must be said that the spacious promenade deck was a source of never failing convenience to the majority of the passengers. The sufferers from *mal de mer* were to be found all day long, obtaining the greatest relief with the least amount of inconvenience or exertion. Here, too, merry parties, engaged in light conversation, whiled away a pleasant hour. Cricket and tennis, athletic sports and quoits were all indulged in, with far less hindrance to the orthodox mode than could have been expected. Balls and concerts also took place on the promenade deck; and so steady (as a rule) was the good ship that dancing was enjoyed with the utmost comfort and safety. And, indeed, when an occasional "roll" did occur, the spice of danger only added zest to the fun, to the dancers and onlookers alike.

A large and choice library, containing books suited to all ages and tastes, was very highly appreciated judging from the "run" made upon it.

But, in addition to all these means of amusement and recreation, a great deal of the passengers' pleasure necessarily depends upon the captain and officers of the steamer in which they have taken up their abode for the time being. Of course, there are always some, wherever you go, who are never satisfied with the arrangements, and who are continually grumbling at the officers for their fancied neglect of them. For our part, I can truly testify to the kindness and courtesy with which we were treated by Capt. Conlan and the whole of the officers of the *Orizaba*. Indeed some of the officers received us as old friends, doing everything in their power, in the most willing spirit, to make our voyage as agreeable as possible.

The captain especially looked after the ladies who were suffering from sea sickness; and I feel quite sure that some of them—one lady, at any rate, will ever gratefully remember the kindness of this typical sea captain—will not soon forget what they owed to him.

The first night spent on board I shall not soon forget, as we lay at anchor off Tilbury. The evening was calm and cool, and the effect of thousands of ships' lights was extremely soothing and pretty. It was, in fact, an auspicious commencement of a happy voyage. We found the steamer had a full complement of passengers on board, the numbers, including those getting on at Plymouth and Naples, being 120 first saloon; 130 second saloon; and 700 third-class and steerage. Including the crew, the occupants of this "floating village" numbered no less than 1,200 souls! Nor

must be forgotten the cargo, luggage, food, &c., of which large quantities were carried. I remember some of us amused ourselves with making calculations as to the quantity and value of the steamer's freight,—calculations which would now raise a sceptical smile were I to repeat them here. Suffice it to say that no reasonable person could find fault with the quantity and quality of the catering, in the first saloon at any rate.

IN THE ATLANTIC.

EARLY on Friday, the 25th November, 1887, we steamed down the river, and by noon were off the chalk cliffs of Dover, where a few hundred yards away was to be seen the wreck of the emigrant ship Scholten, the masts of which were sticking out of the water.

About ten o'clock on Saturday we reached Plymouth, and anchored just inside the Sound for the purpose of taking on more passengers. A fine view of the Hoe could be obtained through the glass, as well as of the fort, on which is mounted a 100-ton gun. Here two stowaways, who had been discovered early in the morning, were sent ashore. For hours they had been objects of commiseration to us as they stood on the quarter deck, handcuffed to the railing, begrimed with soot and coal dust.

At ten o'clock at night we entered the dreaded Bay of Biscay, and did not leave it until ten o'clock on Monday morning. The effect on the passengers of the chopping of the sea was most noticeable. All but the old stagers were more or less sick; and I must confess that, though I suffered as little as anybody, I was not sorry when we were sailing on smoother water.

On Monday, I was agreeably surprised to find that an old Rossall fellow was on board with his wife. Not only was he at the same school with me, but he was also under the same house master, and in the same study. It was very pleasant to meet thus for the first time since our school days. This reminds me that we met a Mr. Rodgers who had been in the Colonies some time. He had been educated at Stonyhurst, and seemed to have agreeable recollections of the Rev. Chas. Boardman, D.D., of Longridge, then librarian at the famous Catholic School. On Tuesday I was up about 6-30, and saw one of the most beautiful sunrises I have ever seen. Many a time from Longridge Fells have I gazed with admiration, not unmingled with awe, on the glory of an autumn or summer sunrise, but never did I witness

anything equal to the one I saw off the coast of Portugal on Tuesday. A cloudless sky of the deepest blue, tinged on the horizon with yellow and red, was suddenly transformed with a blaze of golden sunshine.

Soon we passed Trafalgar Point, ever memorable to all patriotic Englishmen. The view of the coast line as we reared Gibraltar was very fine. On one side the snow-capped peaks of the mountains of Morocco, with lower down on the slopes, the pretty Moorish villages relieved by the vineyards, of which there were many. On the other side, the fertile plains of Southern Spain, with here and there on the hill tops the ruins of old Moorish watch-towers. And then the sight of Gibraltar—the scene of many a long and bitter siege—the bay filled with shipping; to the right the singularly rugged and striking rock itself, bristling with guns and lined with barracks. I do not think we were above three or four miles away; and, as the day was extremely fine, we congratulated ourselves upon having had a rare treat. On the African side was the town of Tangiers, with scores of minarets of its many mosques glittering in the glorious sunshine. And the sea—the lovely sea—blue as the sky above, as soft and smooth as satin, completed a picture which I have dreamt of many a time, but never hoped to see.

Perhaps it would be as well that I should say here that I am quite aware that those who may do me the honour to read these pages could easily obtain a far better and fuller account of what I may hereafter describe, by referring to the many excellent and entertaining guide books or other works of travel. My object in writing these letters, in the first instance, was to give the observation of an ordinary educated Englishman; and accordingly I carefully abstained from consulting any of the guide books, desiring to bring to bear upon what I saw a mind untrammelled by any preconceived ideas.

AMUSEMENTS.

A concert or two, and a ball, had meanwhile given enjoyment to us during the evenings. In addition, some mesmeric experiments were performed in the smoking-room by Prof. Kennedy, an American resident in Manchester, who must be well known to the people of East Lancashire, and Blackburn in particular. It seems he had a very good subject travelling with him in the steerage, and upon this man, lately engaged in a Sunderland shipbuilding yard, his

experiments were conducted. After mesmerising him in a most simple fashion, Prof. Kennedy made him make a speech in the character of Lord Randolph Churchill, sing a comic song, &c. Then to show that in his mesmerised condition he was quite insensible to pain, he passed a needle through both his cheeks, through his nose and ears, without the man evincing the slightest symptom of pain. It was a wonderful performance, and a sceptic though I am in these matters, I couldn't for the life of me imagine how it was done. A collection made for the poor subject quite satisfied him for the trouble he had experienced.

I cannot refrain from mentioning the names of the two daughters, girls about twelve and fourteen years of age, of the Marquis di Gallidoro, who contributed so much to the pleasure of the passengers by the charming way in which they played on the mandoline. Truly sorry we were to bid them good-bye at Naples, at which place we anchored early on Friday, the 2nd December.

NAPLES.

THE view from this point—Ischia, one of the islands close to Naples,—was exceedingly lovely. Here one could see the white marble houses in clusters along the sea shore, dotted amongst the lovely verdure. Up to the time that we cast anchor in the Bay of Naples the scenery was of the most charming kind, and loud as have been the praises I have heard sung in favour of this well-known place, still I shall now be always ready to add my humble testimony that its beauty has not been over-estimated.

Early on Friday we went to the Museum at Naples. The first room contained a number of frescoes of subjects which showed that art centuries ago was far more realistic than it is now. The most interesting objects to be seen, however, were relics of Pompeii, including human bodies in every variety of age and posture. Then there were coins, vases, garments, and everything in common use, all in the most perfect condition. Some of the sculpture and paintings were of extraordinary merit, as well as in an extraordinary state of preservation. A fine model of Pompeii, which showed that only about one-third of the city had been restored, was also exhibited; as well as old iron stocks; the cameos, too, and jewelry were particularly noticeable.

Then we had a drive through the principal streets of Naples, in the course of which we saw many things strange and new, and were greatly impressed by the free and careless

air of the inhabitants, besides being surprised to see so many good-looking men and women, all above the average height, and all apparently trying to enjoy life as easily and pleasantly as possible. For my own part I should not dislike the Neapolitan mode of life, were it not for the monstrously bad system of sanitation in vogue. A striking thing is the number of soldiers in the streets, all armed with carbines or swords; and I was much struck in going to Pompeii, by rail, to observe the number of patrols on the line also fully armed.

The railway route to Pompeii is a pleasant one. Coasting the sea shore, and with a range of mountains of which Vesuvius is the most conspicuous on the other side, and lined with olive and fig gardens, the journey of fifty minutes was soon over. Pompeii is, I should judge, about ten miles from Vesuvius, and is itself on a slight eminence,—and when one looks round on the tri-circle of volcanoes which almost encircle it, with Vesuvius emitting dense volumes of smoke with an occasional blaze, one could easily realise the dreadful catastrophe which took place so many years ago.

The entrance to Pompeii is by a steep ascent, and one is immediately struck by the close similarity of the pavement of the streets with that of Naples of to-day. The streets, which are named and numbered, are of no great width, and in many cases there are little or no side-walks. It is wonderful to think that one sees to-day a city as it was so long ago, after being destroyed in some such way as was, I suppose, Sodom of old. The Forum is of stately dimensions; so are the theatres, the Temple of Venus, &c. In many of the houses and theatres paintings and statuary were to be seen, all in an excellent state of preservation. It would be impossible for me to give anything like a full account of what we saw in the few hours at our disposal. Suffice it for me to say that I would strongly urge all visitors to Italy to see this wonderful place, whatever else they may not have time to observe.

We had not sufficient time in which to ascend Vesuvius; but I do not think I shall ever forget the sight of the burning mount. Awe-inspiring and mysterious, one could gaze at it for hours, wondering how it was that during the last 80 years, in which period it has not once ceased to smoke, it was not itself consumed. And the feeling of awe and mystery was much intensified by the sight of the sun rising over Vesuvius, which I was fortunate enough to observe on the following morning.

I was a good deal disappointed in Naples by gaslight. I had anticipated a rare treat, but the sight was tame in the extreme as compared with London, Dublin, or Edinburgh. In a *café chantant* we heard some very fine singing, but which seemed to be, and I suppose was, nothing out of the common to the natives who were present.

On Saturday we had a drive again through the streets of Naples. After a look through the King's Palace, which is almost wholly built of white marble, and which was full of splendid paintings, tapestry, and sculpture, besides very elegant furniture; we drove on slowly down the *Viâ Roma*, and here I was quite innocently the hero of a rather extraordinary and unique scene. I was dressed in my cricket costume, and wore a helmet and puggaree, owing to the extreme heat, thinking nothing about it at the time. But, stopping at a shop on our way, a crowd of all sorts and conditions of men and women gathered round our carriage and gazed at me in admiration, astonishment, and amusement, and with varied gestures and remarks soon made us feel both amused and amazed. But just as we were driving off, I thought this extraordinary piece of behaviour deserved some complimentary return, so I shouted, with becoming grace, "*Viva Victor Immanuel!*" a sentiment which was greeted with much enthusiasm; and so, lifting my hat, we drove rapidly away, having been participants in a scene characteristically Italian in all its features.

No pen, except that, perhaps, of Augustus Hare, could adequately describe the beauties of an Italian street—its quaint and yet grand courtyards, lofty and well-built houses, with fig trees, olives, and vines clustering here and there, and set off inimitably by its frequenters, from the grave priest or friar to the gay and charming peasant girl. We were not sorry, however, to be once more on board our home on the sea; and after a lot of chaffing with the crowds of people on the small boats which swarmed around us we were soon making our way out of the Bay of Naples, *en route* for Port Said.

One has heard and read much of the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea; but we were rather disappointed,—our expectations having been, I suppose, too great. On Sunday we steamed slowly through the Straits of Messina; Mount Etna, although nearly 11,000 feet high, being quite invisible. Nor did I see the far-famed Scylla and Charybdis, owing to an attack of illness which kept me in bed all day.

EGYPT.

EARLY on Wednesday we arrived at Port Said, and anchored in order to coal. Coaling is performed by Arabs, including many from the Soudan, and certainly they work like niggers, without showing any signs of fatigue. It was most amusing to watch them running up and down, smoking cigarettes, and emitting the most unearthly sounds, varied every now and then with a bit of rude horseplay. The dust from the coal was awful, and we were glad to get on shore.

We had a drive round this "sand bank" town, and found it better than we expected. Fairly clean, well built, but badly paved, our first impressions of an Eastern town were by no means unfavourable. Here congregate men from every country on the face of the earth; with, however, a large proportion of Europeans. We had a look at the bazaar, but saw nothing of special interest. Everything seems to be cheap, especially cigars and tobacco, both of excellent quality.

Before leaving Port Said, we saw a troopship, the *Serapis*, on her way home, full of troops. The sight was a pretty one, with her decks crowded with soldiers, all looking so glad to return to dear old England. They expressed their joy by giving three hearty cheers, which were as heartily returned.

The start through the Suez Canal was made just as it was going dark, and of course the electric light was utilised, and admirably did it answer its purpose. Both sides of the Canal were splendidly lit up for quite a quarter of a mile, and the slightest object was easily discovered at that distance from us. The scene, as we slowly steamed along, was enchanting. With the gently rippling waters, illumined by the pale, clear light like that from the moon, on the one hand, and the noiseless desert on the other, I thought as I paced the deck that this must be like Arcady of old.

The maximum speed allowed for steamships in the Canal is five or six knots an hour, except when in the lakes, where full speed is allowed. When daylight came I was anxious to examine the Canal more closely than the electric light permitted. I found that every care was taken to keep it in good order; many large steam dredgers being at work, besides gangs of men repairing the embankments. The wayside stations—veritable oases in the desert,—with their neat gardens and huts, pleasantly varied the monotony of the desert on each side of the Canal.

We arrived at Suez about five o'clock on Thursday night, having had to wait for seven or eight steamers, out of which

six were flying the British flag. Suez looks well from the sea. Lying low, built in one compact mass, it is prettily set off by the trees which line the quay of the port, which is about a mile or so from the town. The town is very dirty, and has nothing of any special interest, except the famous donkeys. We walked through the bazaar, and made a few purchases. In one shop I entered I was most agreeably surprised to find some Lancashire cotton goods on sale, and one class of goods made at my father's mill in particular. I bought a small length for a curiosity, as this class of goods is generally only sold for the English home trade.

Saturday was one of the hottest days we have yet had, the thermometer registering eighty-two degrees in the cabin and 110 on deck, but this is comparatively cool to what we may hope, alas! to experience before many days are over. And, assured though we were by the officers that with the head wind we had we should find the heat in the Red Sea by no means as trying as usual, sure enough the damp, moist heat was almost unbearable. On deck, as below, there was little or no variation in the temperature, so we found it well-nigh impossible to keep cool; but were consoled by the compensating advantage of not catching a chill.

ADEN.

TO GIVE some idea of the sea-going qualities of the good ship *Orizaba*, it is only necessary for me to say that, although we left Suez eight hours after the *Peninsular* and *Oriental* steamer *Ballarat*, we arrived at Aden only one hour after her, viz., at eight a.m. on Tuesday, December 12th.

The town of Aden was entirely hidden from view as we cast anchor about a mile from the Point. Built as the town is on an extinct crater, and surrounded by high and rugged hills, Aden would be a very pretty place were it not for the almost entire absence of vegetation. No greater contrast could possibly be found than that between a tour in dear old England, surrounded with green fields and greener trees, and a tour in Arabia, with sand on the one hand and glaring rocks on the other, forming the only background and affording not the slightest relief, but rather intensifying the dryness and aridity which are very trying to European eyes. But, despite these disadvantages, Aden is the prettiest and most satisfactory place I have yet seen in the East.

The approach to it as you drive from the Point is very fine. The winding road, which gradually leads up to and rapidly descends to the town, is full of all the variety which

makes Eastern life so interesting and picturesque. The stately Arab, on his uncouth camel; the swarthy Bedouin, with shorn head, which glistens in the sun; the cunning Armenian, clad in robes of spotless white; the policeman, who cuts so humorous a figure; the veiled woman; but, above all, the bright and happy children, with teeth of whitest ivory; all these make up a picture which for variety and deep interest you will find in no other country in the world.

Seated in an American buggy, which is driven at a reckless speed, we soon arrived at Aden; and, deferring for a short time our visit to the town, drove on to the Tanks, which are "the sight" of the place. I was much impressed by the strength of Aden as a military station. Heights, which seemed by nature to be almost inaccessible, had been rendered impregnable by military skill and science. Narrow passes were protected by guns, and the entrances could be closed at a moment's notice by heavy iron doors. The tanks hold, I don't know how many, millions of gallons of good drinking water, and have been made many centuries. One tank, of but small dimensions, held, I noticed, one and a quarter million gallons alone. The view from this point was very pretty. Below was the town, beyond the busy quay, laden with human traffic; still further was the bay, in the peaceful waters of which were ships flying the flags of every nation. Close besides us were the lofty volcanic hills, rugged and precipitous; and, above all, the clear blue sky completed a scene it would be hard to equal were there only some green foliage and grass.

Re-entering the town we drove slowly through the bazaar, calling on our way at the American consulate. Mr. Joseph A. Jones, the Consul, a young man of pleasing appearance and kindly address, received us with generous and courteous hospitality. Especially pleased was he to see Mr. Kennedy, who was with us. I was amused to notice the readiness with which he guessed the birthplace—Chicago—of Mr. Kennedy. After providing us with some cooling drinks and liquors, the Consul showed us over his house, the largest and best, he said, in Aden, and which for coolness and comfort combined left nothing to be desired. He had been in Aden about five years, and spoke highly of the place, paying at the same time a high tribute of praise to the industry and business capacity of his countrymen. After a short stay, in the course of which Mr. Jones invited us to pay him a visit should we ever be in Aden again, we resumed our progress through the town, highly pleased with our reception, and at

having met such an intelligent and cultivated gentleman as the American Consul.

A great quantity of ostrich feathers were offered to us for purchase, many of them exceedingly cheap. By the favour of an intelligent policeman, who spoke and understood English very well, we drove along the quay, and were much struck by a fact we elicited. Noticing several Arabs wearing one and two iron bracelets on their arms, we asked our guide what was meant thereby. He said each bracelet represented a man killed by the person wearing one, and parenthetically remarked of the man we were looking at, "He is a good man; he has killed his man." Truly a strange people are these! Amongst other sights we saw were Arab women, wearing rings through their noses and on their toes, and tattooed most fantastically, dancing the native dance, a company of Indian soldiers drilling, &c.

Just before we left Aden, about six p.m., the troopship *Crocodile* came steaming into port, and after taking on board a small party, slowly steamed out again, *en route* for India. She was crowded with troops, who gave and received hearty cheers.

THE INDIAN OCEAN.

THE Indian Ocean strangely reminded me of the Mediterranean Sea: here was the same blue sky, the waters equally blue; and, in addition, shoals of flying-fish darting in and out of the water with the utmost celerity. But at first the thought that we should not sight land, and probably not see a ship, for three weeks or so made us feel strange. However, the various games and amusements in which we indulged, together with the lively conversation of the officers and passengers, kept the time from hanging heavily upon us. Nor must I forget to mention the important function of dinner, which always lasted an hour at least, and which was more or less looked forward to by all.

The heat when we crossed the line, about four p.m., on Sunday, the 14th December, was something awful. We did not, however, experience any shock at all; nor were any of the humorous tricks one reads of in Kingston or Mayne Reid, practised upon us.

The first death took place on board on Monday, the 19th, the victim being a young girl. The burial impressed us all very much. We afterwards experienced rough weather and a great deal of rain. Inconvenient in many ways as this weather was, it came as a very welcome change to the hot

weather we had previously had. On Saturday, December 24th, we buried an old man who had been found dead (from pure exhaustion) in bed the previous day. With the number of people on board the ship, it is surprising that more deaths have not taken place.

People suffering from illness at sea cannot expect the same comforts and conveniences as on shore, but I am sure nothing could exceed the attention paid to the sufferers by the genial ship's doctor. Fruit and every possible delicacy was supplied with no niggardly hands; and the hospital was kept as cool and nice as possible.

Christmas Day at sea! Truly time brings with it surprising changes. Luckily it was a fine and yet cool day, and so there was nothing to mar our happiness. For, though one missed the pleasant greetings of old friends, and the decorations and sights one is accustomed to, still the kindness of the officers and the geniality of one's fellow-passengers helped to make this Christmas at sea one of the happiest I have spent. And I trust I shall be forgiven by the gentleman concerned for saying how pleased the passengers were to receive Christmas cards from Mr. Rd. Tangye, of Birmingham, one of the kindest-hearted passengers on board.

I found out that the Christmas dinner at sea is just as much looked forward to as it is on shore in England. For rumours had been spreading amongst us that the ship's cook had been engaged night and day lately hard at work preparing for the great event. High as were our expectations, they were not doomed to disappointment. Without exception, it was the best dinner I have ever tasted, both as regards variety and quality. When I mention that we had turtle and oyster soup, salmon, pheasant, goose, turkey, and plum pudding, besides numerous entreés, fruits, sweets, joints, &c., it will be seen that I am not at all exaggerating.

On Monday we had some athletic sports, which were a great success. The events included—children's races, egg race by the ladies, which, I am proud to say, was won by my wife in grand style; flat races, long and high jumps, and three-legged race. But what was perhaps the greatest event of all came off on Wednesday, the 28th, in the shape of a fancy dress ball. Now in England there is not much difficulty in people finding suitable costumes in which to appear, but on board ship the difficulties—difficulties almost insurmountable but for the barber's help—in the way are very great. How very successful the ball was may be gathered from the fact that over 100 of the passengers

appeared in handsome and humorous costumes. Some of the characters represented were—Chief officer in the Navy, convicts, Emperor of China, Indian postboy, Arab chief, Cæsar, Roman lady, Father Christmas, Britannia, Druid, fishwife, nigger, shepherdess, my wife as hospital nurse, and myself as quarter-master of the Navy. Most of those were quite elaborately got up, and did credit to those personating them. Dancing was kept up with great spirit until twelve p.m., under some difficulties, the ship rolling a good deal. There were no accidents, however, I am glad to say, of any serious nature, although my wife fell while dancing, and hurt herself.

Pleasant as the life has been on board the *Orizaba* for the last five weeks, everybody was delighted when the western coast of Australia was sighted at noon on Thursday, the 29th December. We may now easily calculate when we shall be at Adelaide, our first place of call.

On Saturday, New Year's Eve, we spent one of the most enjoyable days we ever had. Everybody was full of life and hope; and the amusements provided for the evening comprised a farce and ball. The farce, one of Sheridan's plays, "St. Patrick's Day," was a great success. The make-up of the actors was superintended by Mr. Ward, of Toole's Theatre, and was simply perfect, and as an amateur performance the whole affair was very good.

New Year's Day was fine and warm, and the usual greetings were exchanged by us all. At 10-30 we sighted Cape Borda, and knew we should be at Port Adelaide early on Monday. This we did at 6-30 a.m. The contrast between the scene on our arrival here and that at Naples or Aden was most noticeable. At Adelaide a couple of tenders came alongside. All was order and quietness; but at Aden such a hubbub took place, which, but for its novelty and picturesqueness, would have been intolerable.

ADELAIDE.

THE first appearance of Port Adelaide from the sea is something like that of Folkestone or Dover, on a less scale; lying low, and with a good stretch of beach in front, with a background of hills, which, from a distance appear barren sandhills, reminding one much of those on the Red Sea coast, but which on closer inspection turn out to be covered with fruitful vineyards. One can hardly believe that to-day—which is kept as New Year's Day, the 1st having fallen on Sunday—is really the 2nd of January. With blue and cloudless sky, blinding dust raised by every passing vehicle,

flowers in full bloom, with such fruits as cherries and strawberries to tempt you as you pass along; with men and women attired in lightest and coolest looking garments—all these and many more signs tell you that you are in a new country, far away from the frost and snow, or fog and rain, of cold, cheerless England.

The town of Adelaide, which is some six or seven miles away from the Port, is divided into North and South Adelaide by the people's park. This arrangement—natural or artificial, I know not which—seems to me to be a unique one; and of its advantages I soon found the people are very sensible. The botanical gardens are exceedingly well laid out; indeed, I found these gardens were quite a feature of Australian social life; and have no doubt their effect upon the minds of the people who frequent them must be beneficial. The streets are wide and very clean; indeed, I learnt that the South Australians call Adelaide the cleanest town in Australia. Certainly it was cleaner than any town I have seen in England, except Stratford-on-Avon. The houses and shops are well built, most of the former, especially in the suburbs, being only one story high. Plenty of timber gives the town a pretty and cool appearance, in spite of the extreme heat.

In the course of a drive round the town I gathered from our intelligent driver, with whom I had an interesting conversation, that Adelaide is called the "City of Churches," owing to the number of sacred edifices in it. I saw a large number of churches; but I also noticed that there were two or three times as many public-houses, thus proving once more the truth of the well-known adage. We paid a short visit to the Jubilee Exhibition, which, after Manchester and London, looked only poor to our eyes.

From what I could learn in the course of a short stay, South Australia is now in a more flourishing condition than for some time back. A good harvest, the exhibition, a large advance in the price of wool, and the extension of the railway system are the main factors in bringing about this desirable state of things. The labour market, too, has benefitted, and to-day there is work for everybody who is at all willing to work.

That being the last whole day on which the bulk of the passengers would be together, a supper was held, in which complimentary toasts were proposed, among others one by myself, wishing prosperity to the Orient line, and to the Orizaba and its officers in particular, which was responded to by the purser, in the temporary absence of the captain.

MELBOURNE.

WE ARRIVED at Melbourne at 1-30 p.m. on the 4th January, 1888, in rather squally weather. The entrance to the bay reminded me of Naples, on a larger but less pretty scale. The shore, which is in the shape of a horse shoe, is entirely built on, and with shipping in the foreground and the large buildings of Melbourne in the distance, a nice view was obtained from the ship, thus making our first impression a pleasant one. This was amply confirmed after a cursory view of the city. I had heard a good deal about Melbourne from old Victorians on board, and expected to be somewhat disappointed when I really saw it. But in whatever aspect Melbourne is regarded, I venture to say it will bear comparison with any town in the world. The streets are broad, clean, and well laid out; the houses are neat and pretty; the warehouses substantial; the shops magnificent; public buildings handsome; and its tramcars perfection. Collins Street is, I should say, equal in many respects to Regent Street or Piccadilly; fully a mile in length, it is both a fashionable lounge and a centre of commercial activity. The Town Hall, Banks, Exchange, and newspaper offices are all in this street. But the cable cars are the wonder and glory of Melbourne. For speed, comfort, and smoothness, I should say they are unsurpassable, besides being very cheap.

We called on an old friend of *The Preston Guardian* this morning, Mr. Tipping, of the *Argus*. He was looking very well, and was much pleased to see us, making many inquiries about old friends in England. He evidently likes life in Melbourne, though, of course, there are many disadvantages as compared with English life.

A short trip to Kew, a suburb about five miles out, proved a pleasant one, and, strange to say, very like our own Kew was this pretty place. Quite a fashionable place, evidently, judging from the number of well-built, handsome houses which lined the road. We also called on Mr. W. R. Cave-Browne-Cave, of the Premier's office, Treasury, and were most kindly received by him and his wife. Mr. Cave is brother to the Rev. F. A. Cave-Browne-Cave, Vicar of Longridge, and it is to this friend of ours that we are indebted for his letter of introduction.

The first impressions I formed of Melbourne are, I know, stated in brief and hurried terms; but the more I have seen of this city, I can truly say, the more I like it. Its broad streets, fine buildings, comfortable cable trams, and pure air,

are truly enjoyable, and must make life in it fairly easy. Indeed, Mr. Tipping, of the *Argus*, told us his experience was "that Australia was the working man's paradise." Curiously enough, a short time after this conversation I saw, from a telegraphic report of his speech, that Dr. Dale had expressed the same opinion in the same words.

Each succeeding day of our stay in Melbourne was my mind filled with wonder and astonishment at the marvellous growth of this Southern Metropolis. I could scarcely realise the fact that fifty years ago the present site of Melbourne was a small squatting homestead. What do we see to-day? "One of the most successful cities on the face of the earth," as Trollope has described it. Melbourne had, in 1886, a population of 305,000. Everything that can conduce to the comfort and well-being of the people is to be found here: A magnificent Free Library; Museums; Art Galleries; beautiful Parks and public Gardens; pure water, and plenty of it; Free State Schools; besides many other advantages too numerous to particularise.

As I have briefly stated, Melbourne has many handsome public buildings, including the Town Hall, the Free Library, and Government Buildings.

Horse-racing, cricket, football, and, I am sorry to say, prize-fighting, number thousands among their devotees. And, as far as I could learn, there was less immorality and drunkenness in Melbourne than in any other city of its size in the civilised world.

SOCIAL NOTES.—VICTORIA.

Now, I know it is the proper thing for anyone who travels at all to give his ideas, more or less sweeping, of the political and social state of the country he may for the first time visit. To my mind this is a great mistake, and leads very often to the people at home being misled. And in my own case especially, seeing what a short time I was in Australia, I should be very foolish and presumptuous indeed if I ventured to pronounce judgment upon such things. So that, although I express my opinions upon what I see or hear, still I do not desire either to mislead home readers or to offend Colonial friends by what I may say, and am therefore ready enough to qualify my opinion when I am wrong in my facts and conclusions.

One cannot help noticing the affectionate way in which the Victorians (and I am told in New South Wales it is even more noticeable) speak of the home country. England in

their conversation is always "home." Of course this is only observing the due order of things; but in these days of independence, and when so much depends upon the true unity of the Empire, this feeling—merely sentimental or not matters little—should count for a great deal in its bearings upon Imperial Federation.

The Victorians have the reputation of being a sharp-witted people, and seem proud of the fact that they are not easily imposed upon by strangers or others.

Of their kindness and hospitality to the "home" people I can testify from personal experience.

The worst feature of social life in the Australian colonies is, I am told, the relationship that exists between children of ten years old and upwards and their parents. The consequence of their training is a spirit of precocious independence, which has the effect of placing these immature men and women upon a footing of equality with those whom nature designed to be their tutors and guides.

Another evil is the dearth of good domestic servants. Wages are high, as much as £40 a year being a common wage; but the work is hard, one servant having to do the work of two in England.

In public life, both municipal and parliamentary, the worst feature seems to be jobbery and corruption. If everything one hears and reads be true, Victoria is as bad as the United States of America in this respect. The main causes are, I suppose, similar to those in our own country and America—an absence of interest in public affairs by men who, by position and capability, ought to be leaders. How sad it is to find such men forgetting that their position has its duties as well as its rights! Colonial politics are not, of course, formed on our party lines, for here the Liberal party is Protectionist, and the Conservative party in favour of Free Trade; but still there seems to be a strong democratic feeling. A remarkable fact I have noticed, and own I am at a loss to explain, is the character of the telegrams received and published by the leading newspapers of Victoria from England, more particularly those having reference to the Irish question. For instance, to give one or two examples. The London correspondent of the *Australasian*, in his letter of December 2nd, describes the Dublin correspondent of *The Times* as "a very competent authority" on Irish political affairs. Now, anyone at all conversant with Irish politics knows that if there is an intolerant and unjust journalist it is Dr. Patten, the Dublin correspondent of *The Times*; and yet readers of Australian papers are

weekly treated to some of his most reliable tit-bits about Irish Nationalists. I saw, too, in the *Argus* and *Age*, news of Mr. Sexton's illness, but not a word to show that he was getting better. I could give many more examples of the way in which truth is suppressed in the daily telegrams from London.

GEELONG—BALLARAT—LAL LAL.

GEELONG, with great natural advantages, is yet a sleepy, slow place. It was, however, well worth a visit for its splendid harbour and Botanical Gardens. Here we met an old Lancaster man, Mr. Pye, now a government teacher at Melbourne. Mr. Pye was delighted to find that I knew many of the people he had known and taught before he came out to the Colonies. He very kindly promised to show us the best things in Melbourne, on our return early in February.

Our visit to Ballarat was an extremely pleasant one, as after leaving Geelong the railway runs through a portion of "Bush" land, which is very strange and fascinating. The city of Ballarat, which, but for the discovery of gold in 1851, would probably not be the second city in Victoria, is quite unlike an English centre of industry. With its wide streets—one of which, Sturt Street, is 198 feet wide, and one of the finest thoroughfares in the world—lined with trees, large public buildings, and pure air everywhere, Ballarat resembles a fashionable watering-place more than a mining town. We paid a visit to the Band and Albion Gold Mine Company Gold Mine, and were treated with the utmost courtesy and consideration by the working manager, Mr. Wattis. The mode of obtaining the gold from the quartz is very interesting, and was thoroughly explained to us, from its "stamping" to its extraction by mercury. Arsenic and red lead are also obtained in large quantities from the quartz, making the work of gold mining very profitable. Lake Wendouree, a sheet of water covering an area of 600 acres, and the Botanical Gardens are among the leading sights of the city.

On our way back to Melbourne we got out at Lal Lal, a station on the main line, with an intention of having a look at the celebrated waterfalls. Unfortunately rain came on so heavily that we had to take refuge at the only house in sight, which turned out to be the farmhouse of Mr. Way, an old Birmingham resident. We were made welcome by his daughter, with whom we had a long talk, seated by the side of a huge fireplace. After a fragrant cup of tea, and a long

chat with the old man, who was very kind and intelligent, we returned through the "bush," not at all sorry now that we had been stopped by the rain. Life under such circumstances should not be unpleasant, except for the loneliness and awful silence which oppressed me as we walked through the avenue of forest trees.

The sunset was one of the finest I ever saw. A broad streak of pure gold with edging of dusky grey, and the pure azure sky above dotted here and there with clouds, produced an effect like the sea—the colours alone being different.

SYDNEY.

To see Sydney at its best it is necessary, especially when one is on his first visit, that it should be approached from the sea. Such was our good fortune, and still more fortunate we were in seeing it on a gloriously fine day. As you pass within a short distance of the high and dangerous headlands, against the foot of which the waves dash in all their majestic grandeur, and suddenly steam into a beautiful and land-locked harbour, one can easily understand how its first known discoverer, Captain Philips (for Cook unaccountably had passed it), must have rejoiced with a large and yet solemn joy.

You are struck in the first instance with the beauty of the harbour—or rather harbours, for, as you sail along, you find coves and bays almost innumerable. The land on each side is hilly, the slopes being covered with trees and rocks, with here and there clusters of villas—the effect of which is very fine. This "royal water," as Sydney harbour has been so aptly and poetically described by an Australian writer, is large enough and deep enough to allow of the largest navies of the world anchoring here in perfect safety. The convenience—to use no stronger term—of such a ship as the *Orizaba* being able to come alongside the wharf, within five minutes' walk of the centre of the city, is simply incalculable. Well may New South Welshmen speak with pardonable pride of "our beautiful harbour." Numerous steamers ply to and fro on the harbour during the day; and it would be difficult to enjoy oneself in a pleasanter fashion than in sailing round, or in making excursions to the various suburbs in the harbour.

Sydney is a great contrast to the city of Melbourne. We were reminded more of London, or Liverpool, with their comparatively narrow and winding streets. Melbourne, too,

is rather flat, while Sydney is hilly in the extreme. The steam trams, ugly and dangerous, were a great eyesore. The heat, too, was oppressive, being most humid. And last, but not least, to enumerate the inconveniences—were mosquitoes, which found their way to the new “chum’s” flesh in spite of every precaution in the way of nets and the like.

The finest buildings I noticed were the Post Office, fronting Pitt Street and George Street, the two leading thoroughfares; and the Town Hall. But, next to “our beautiful harbour,” the far-famed Botanical Gardens are the glory and pride of Sydney. Overlooking part of the harbour these gardens are splendidly situated; no visitor to the Colonies should miss seeing them. They are laid out with the greatest taste, and kept in the best possible order; with lawns sown with “couch” grass, which is not only green in the most scorching weather, but is also as soft to the feet as the thickest carpet. I noticed well-grown specimens of English and foreign trees, besides palms, pines and tree ferns; there were also growing in great profusion splendid stove and greenhouse flowers, including amongst others, bouganvilleas, euphorbias, azaleas, and dracenas.

We were, I suppose, lucky in being at Sydney during the Centennial celebrations, as more than ordinary opportunity was afforded us of seeing the place at its best. The principal events were—unveiling the Queen’s statue in Hyde Park; laying the foundation stone of the new Houses of Parliament; a regatta in the harbour; trades procession; and several banquets. In addition, the principal streets were brilliantly illuminated, as well as the men of war and ocean steamers in the harbour. The regatta was a great success, there being a stiff breeze, and what would be called in England “Queen’s weather.” No less than 3,500 people were on board the *Orizaba*, which was the flagship, having been given over to the committee for the day. As we watched the races from a Mr. Fairfax’s house (through the great kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Leigh, of Sydney), which overlooked Neutral Bay, the sight was a charming one. The various points of vantage were crowded with people, innumerable craft of every description were on the water, and on every side of us were the bays and inlets of “our beautiful harbour.” The illuminations were very fine, and, so far as I could observe, seemed to be fairly general. Hyde Park looked like fairyland, being lit up with thousands of Chinese and other lamps. I didn’t see the other events, having other engagements, but the enthusiasm

evoked was, I gathered, not nearly so unanimous as had been expected.

PARAMATTA—HAWKESBURY RIVER.

Two enjoyable days were spent by us in going to Paramatta by steamer, to see the famous orange groves, and in a trip to the Hawkesbury River.

Paramatta is a nice town ; and while not the best time of the year (end of January) for seeing the orange groves in their beauty, the sight of the trees well laden with small green fruit was well worth seeing.

The sail up the Hawkesbury River was a charming one, the scenery being very grand and impressive ; and one could hardly quarrel with the name given to it of "The Rhine of Australia."

THE BLUE MOUNTAINS.

ONE of the most enjoyable trips we had in New South Wales was that to the far-famed Blue Mountains, access to which is obtained by means of the wonderful zig-zag railway. Our headquarters were fixed at Mount Victoria, where we passed a truly pleasant stay of a week or so : a stay made all the more pleasant owing to Mr. and Mrs. R. Tangye, Mr. and Mrs. Martin, and Mr. H. and Miss Martin, of Huddersfield, who had been our fellow passengers in the *Orizaba*, staying at the same hotel. This zig-zag railway is a marvel of engineering skill : the natural difficulties which had to be overcome being stupendous. The distance from Sydney to Mount Victoria is under 80 miles, but it took no less than five hours to accomplish the journey.

The change from the heat, dust, and mosquitoes of Sydney was wonderful, and was highly appreciated by us all. During our stay we thoroughly explored this part of the Blue Mountains. One morning, standing as I did on the summit of Mount Piddington—so named in honour of the Hon. W. R. Piddington, M.L.C., who has been to a great deal of trouble in providing facilities to tourists,—I easily discerned the reason of the name given to these mountains. A most lovely shade of dark blue settling over the whole of the surrounding heights, an effect produced, I suppose, by the quantity of trees which clothe them, delights the eye. The air, too, at the elevation of over 3,000 feet, is very pure and bracing, and it is little wonder that doctors recommend this district as a health resort. We had a pleasant walk from Mount Piddington through

some lovely glens and natural fern gullies. I have often feasted my eyes on the wonderful scenes of tropical vegetation painted by Doré, and have insensibly felt their solemnity and grandeur. And here I gazed on scenes very similar indeed. There may not have been the exuberance of fern and other ground vegetation, nor yet the huge giant trees to be seen in Doré's pictures of South American forest life. But here are trees growing most luxuriantly in deep shady glens, 1,000 feet or more below the surrounding heights, with boulders entwined with thorns and ferns of every sort. Large tree ferns abound also, besides many rare ferns one sees in English ferneries and hothouses, specimens of which I have preserved. Here and there are waterfalls, of no great fall it is true, but none the less pretty. I said great care had been bestowed by the trustees in affording every facility for the comfort of the public; indeed, but for the steps—wood and stone—with ropes, chains, &c., to assist you, which have been provided, it would be quite impossible to see a tithe of what is now to be seen with the greatest ease. For five or six miles we wandered through fairy glens and fern gullies, every step we took bringing forth fresh wonders, until at last we retraced our footsteps, having enjoyed a delightful day. The Dargle glen in Lord Monk's grounds, near Dublin, resembles, on a very small scale, the sort of scenery to be seen here, and will give those who have seen that famous spot some idea of the beauties of the Blue Mountains.

Later on in the week, we had a drive in a four-in-hand, which proved most enjoyable. The roads were rough at times, but the scenery, up hill and down dale, was exceedingly pretty. After a climb up to the Old Man's Hat, a well-known eminence in this locality, from which a magnificent view was obtained, we drove on to the celebrated Govett's Leap. We were only just in time, too, for we had been barely there a few minutes when a heavy mist rapidly hid the waterfalls from view. However, we had obtained a good glimpse of what was to be seen, and were all loud in our praises of the magnificent view. Descending a hill a few hundred feet, you come upon a projecting rock, from which you see the water, in a thin shower, descending in a beautiful way, only to be dissipated into fine mist, owing to the great depth of the valley beneath. This valley, which no one has yet explored, is entirely hidden from our sight by the mass of lofty trees growing in it. Mr. E. Barton gives the following description, which I cannot refrain from quoting, as it conveys a very

good idea of what I saw :—"Once on the track, the visitor has nothing to do but to follow it up until he reaches the tremendous rut or depression in the earth, which is said to be the deepest chasm with perpendicular cliffs in the known world. It is almost surrounded with the cliffs, which are believed to be nowhere less than 3,000 feet above sea-level. The full sublimity and grandeur of the scene is not realised at the first glance. After contemplating it for some time, the mind becomes filled with awe and wonder as it vainly tries to comprehend—

the vast immeasurable abyss,
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild !"

A short distance from Govett's Leap, we met a man on horseback, attired in clerical garb, carrying a broom, who turned out to be the local parson, a Mr. Simons. Rather a novel sight ! It seems the rev. gentleman is very wealthy, getting little or no salary for his ministerial services. About this time we asked our driver if there were any snakes to be seen. He answered in the negative. A few minutes after, Mr. Martin saw a black snake about four feet long quietly gliding across the footpath to its hole. Having no stick, he very reluctantly watched its leisurely retreat. This, I may add, is the first snake we have seen, but there are great numbers of them in the neighbourhood of the Jenolan caves, which we visited on the 22nd of January.

JENOLAN CAVES.

THE drive was a long one, 35 miles in all, but the country through which our way lay was so interesting, and the scenery of such a grand description, that time did not hang at all heavily on our hands. Some of the roads, or passes, were of a stupendous character. The Victoria Pass, made by convicts many years ago, is about four miles long, and is for the most part hewn out of solid rock. Winding along the mountain sides, or overhanging deep abysses, at times some of us were naturally nervous, but we went along safely, drawn in fine style by four good bays. I do not intend to even attempt a description of the Jenolan (or Fish River) caves, as the wonders there must be seen to be realised. The approach to them is in a perfectly sequestered valley surrounded on every side by high hills ; the actual entrance being from the side of a natural tunnel. Those who have read "Lalla Rookh," or "King Solomon's Mines," will be able to gain some idea of the marvellous beauties we saw in these caves. As one gazes on the rocks glistening like crystal, on stalactites of every form and colour, and on the

grottoes encrusted with coral, the old saying that "fact is stranger and more wonderful than fiction." is remembered; and the fact that our common mother's—Nature—works far excel those of human skill or imagining. For hours we wandered through these halls, every fresh step we took discerning fresh beauties. But, as I said before, I am quite unable to do adequate justice to what we saw by any words of mine. I ought to add that the caves are under government management, and that the guide, Mr. Jeremiah Wilson—"Old Jerry," as he is familiarly called—is assiduous in his efforts to make the stranger's visit a success, besides being quite willing to tell, when pressed to do so, the world-famed story of "Elijah."

HOMEWARDS—BEATING THE RECORD.

AFTER all we were not sorry to be once again on board the *Orizaba* on our way home (Jan. 31st, 1888). We received a hearty welcome from the captain and officers, and were delighted to find that a few of the passengers who had come out with us were also going to return in the same steamer. Soon we learnt that we were going to have the excitement of "beating the record." For Captain Conlan confided to us his intention of letting people know what the good ship *Orizaba* could do in the way of speed. A reputation for steadiness the ship had already obtained; but hitherto a series of untoward delays at various ports had made it impossible for the captain to make anything like a record. Up to our arrival at Port Said on Feb. 29th, at 2 a.m., we had beaten any previous run homewards by twelve hours or more, notwithstanding a delay of six hours at Adelaide, caused by our having to wait for the supplementary mails which the North German Lloyd's steamer brought, and in addition to the loss of time incurred by the Orient Company's boats having for the first time to call at King George's Sound. Besides these delays we unluckily got aground in the Suez Canal, a most unusual thing for a large ship like the *Orizaba*. It was, however, very pleasing to us to see the commendable promptitude with which, under the directions of the officers, we were got off. I do not think more than half an hour elapsed between our getting off again. Lucky it was for us that our boat had got stuck instead of one of three smaller steamers which were following us. Of course, the fairly good weather we have had was in our favour, but that one day we steamed no less than 404 knots, and have done a daily average of 350 knots, proves

clearly enough the good steaming qualities of the *Orizaba*. Sorry we were that Captain Conlan's attempt to break the record was only partially successful. The run from Adelaide to Naples was the fastest on record; but, after leaving that port, bad weather and unforeseen circumstances hindered the accomplishment of the rest of the plan. The utmost credit is due, not only to the Captain, but also to the Chief Engineer, Mr. Wood, the latter of whom must have had an anxious time. The voyage home varied little, of course, in its main details, from the outward one which has been already described. There were the usual games, dances, and concerts, and the forming of fresh acquaintances.

I have said little or nothing about the Sunday Services held on board, as Sunday at sea has been so often described that the *modus operandi* must be well-known.

GIBRALTAR.

THERE was however one variation in the voyage homewards which we anticipated with great pleasure, viz., calling at Gibraltar, as we expected to have a run on shore there. As we entered the bay, about two o'clock in the afternoon (March 6th), we found the Channel Squadron practising. We were again much impressed with the great strength of this "key of the old world;" impregnable from three sides, at least it seemed to a civilian's gaze. As we were only allowed an hour and a half on shore, we had only time to drive through the town; thus, much to our disappointment, being unable to visit the "galleries." My impressions of what we saw are briefly these—a substantially built town with narrow streets, very bad smells, curious shops, and interesting people. We went over the frontier into the Spanish lines to see the Bull Circus, which was a large amphitheatre open to the sky, with stone seats. But what impressed us most, as we passed through the streets, was the evidence we saw everywhere that "Gib" was a military town. Soldiers on all sides; cannon planted all over; drawbridges, sentry boxes and forts abounding like mushrooms—all these were sights never to be forgotten.

After leaving Gibraltar we all naturally turned our thoughts towards England, which, unfortunately for the Colonials on board, we sighted under unfavourable auspices; for, although off Portugal the weather was simply perfection, when in the Bay of Biscay a fog came on which continued more or less until our arrival in the Thames, early on Sunday, March 11th. And, as if to show how very "smart" we English

were, we were detained in the Custom House, at Tilbury, four or five hours ! While glad to get back to England once more, we were very sorry to leave the good ship Orizaba, on which we had spent so many pleasant days ; and truly sorry to leave the officers who, one and all, had been so kind to us.



